

# SUPPLEMENT

## TO THE

# NONCONFORMIST.

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[GRATIS.]

### ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY, 1862.

What manner of day it was on Sunday, August 24, 1862, history has failed to tell, but St. Bartholomew's-day, 1862, was one which formed a bright, happy, and peaceful commemoration of an act of silent and heroic suffering. A thin haze hung over the metropolis in the earlier part of the day, but elsewhere the sun shone with a mellow brightness, suggestive of calm and quiet thoughts, and inclining to grateful recollection and praise. It was not a day for ill-natured attacks or angry recriminations, or for the exhibition of any feeling of theological bitterness or ecclesiastical strife. Down upon the broad earth—over weltering streets and running streams, quiet gardens and rustling groves, green meadows and brown cornfields, the face of God's messenger shone as benignantly as though all beneath were good and righteous as when the Almighty looked and saw that all was good. Why on that day should his other messengers—that day of all others—minister to strife and ill-will? More fitting was it that, remembering the spirit of their Master, yielding to the natural influences of His Gospel, and touched with a somewhat gentler and kindlier spirit than usual on this bright and blessed Day of Rest, they should speak words only of brotherly kindness, faithfulness, and love. If more fitting for one day than another, or if especially appropriate for a single class, the day for such words was St. Bartholomew's Day, 1862, and the men to utter them the descendants of the ejected, the imprisoned, the persecuted.

The reader will see from our columns of to-day that the Commemoration of the Bicentenary has been fitting and appropriate. More public addresses are reported in the present number of the *Nonconformist* than perhaps any newspaper has ever before attempted to report. For the day was as universally as it was fittingly celebrated. No part of the country was silent. The smallest villages kept it as sacredly as the great towns, and the almost infinite metropolis. On that day, also, the Nonconformists, for most part, remembered only their common ancestry. Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, were Nonconformist believers—no separating *ism* preventing the same truths being enforced, and the same lesson taught, from the same common facts. The day, therefore, it may be hoped, has welded us closer together in spirit, sympathy, and purpose.

In other ways the commemoration has been a most worthy one. Next to the lofty morality of tone, the inflexibility of principle, and the profound spirituality which characterise the discourses preached last Sunday, no common feature will perhaps strike the reader more forcibly than the intellectual ability which they display. The Nonconformist ministers as a whole have shown themselves in this as in some other matters not unworthy of their ancestry. It would, we believe, be impossible for any body of Christians in the world more ably to set forth the principles and lessons of the Gospel than have those preachers who last Sunday held forth the word of truth to the vast

multitudes who had willingly and spontaneously come to listen.

Let us express our satisfaction with one other feature. There was no uniformity in the celebration. There was danger lest it should be prostituted to sectarian purposes. Happily—and to the honour of the churches let it be said—the danger has been averted. It would have been the saddest of all spectacles to see this memorial day made a day of sectarian profit—to see the two thousand dishonoured by their names being used merely as charms wherewith to charm for the profiting of a denomination or the magnifying of a sect.

The reader may quickly see the general character and drift of the discourses by looking at the texts. The eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Hebrews appear to have been the most favourite sources, but were by no means universally selected. The words most frequently chosen appear to have been from the eleventh chapter:—"And he went out, not knowing whither he went."

The manner in which the subjects were dealt with will commend itself generally to the reader's profound admiration. With great appropriateness, the ejected were allowed in many instances, where they had been the means of founding existing churches, to speak for themselves, copious extracts being read from their "Farewell Sermons." Their history of the Ejection was also, in very many cases, given. The most elaborate historical review was presented by Mr. BINNEY. It will be a source of gratification to Nonconformists of all classes that the author of "Protestant Nonconformity," "Dissent not Schism," "The Gorham Case," and "Two Centuries Ago: Then and Now," has spoken also on this question at this time.

The marked similarity of the lessons drawn from the event commemorated on this remarkable day will scarcely fail to attract general notice. Many, if not the majority, of the preachers unhesitatingly drew the anti-State-Church moral. "Man's instincts and reasonings reject the rule of any human authority in the matter of the conscience and the soul," said the Rev. G. W. CONDER. "It is in vain," said the Rev. A. RALEIGH, "to make another experiment of putting down free thought by force." "We learn" from this "the absolute futility of persecution." So the Rev. CHARLES STANFORD considered that the connexion of religion with the State was the principal cause of division; and the Rev. MARK WILKS denounced it as an evil. In the sermons of the Rev. JOHN GRAHAM, PAXTON HOOD, Dr. PARKER, T. W. AVELING, A. M. HENDERSON, BENJAMIN KEIRT, T. T. LYNCH, and many others, will be found similar remarks. "The ultimate principles of the two differ," said the last-named preacher. "The State compels: the Church persuades. The State rests on power: the Church on thought. The State manages an outward sphere: the Church rules the hearts and consciences of men."

Other spiritual facts and truths were not missed. The event, said the Rev. J. C. HARRISON, teaches "conscientiousness not only in subscription, but in every department of religion and practical life." "We learn from it," said the Rev. J. KILSBY JONES, that there is such a thing as human conscience." This lesson to Nonconformists was forcibly expressed by the Rev. Professor GREEN, of Rawdon College—"If our Nonconformity be worth anything, it must be based on faith, and a faith that is 'self-renouncing.'"

The manner in which Churchmen of the present day were referred to will scarcely, we may venture to

hope, excite a single angry feeling. "The secret," said Mr. BINNEY, "seemed to be possessed by some how subscription might be harmonised with the denial of almost everything subscribed;" but, said Mr. JONES, of Tonbridge Chapel, we make "no imputations on those who subscribe;" and, said Mr. STANFORD, "we judge no man." The hope was also expressed by more than one speaker that this celebration would "entirely do away with subscription," and "mitigate the bondage of the clergy."

It will be scarcely possible for any man—be he Churchman or Dissenter—to read these remarkable addresses without having his heart and conscience touched at many points by the arguments, deductions, and appeals made and enforced in a hundred different ways, by hundreds of the ablest ministers of Christ's holy Gospel. Never since Christianity was established has such an opportunity been afforded for seeing how, in a single Sabbath-day, the word of Christ is put before the people of England. The *Nonconformist* to-day opens to the eye of the reader the doors of hundreds of churches. Should it not be with profound gratitude that the sight is witnessed? Thankful for ancestry, and thankful for our privileges—thankful that to us has been committed the charge of our principles—thankful that we have had an opportunity of expressing our sense of the worth of these principles—and thankful if we feel more willing to live a life of self-sacrifice, [so that they may be advanced though we be left behind—thankful at the inspiring assurance that we do not stand alone in our testimony and work;—are not these the feelings with which you have read the proceedings of this great commemoration? The generation that has lived to see St. Bartholomew's Day, 1862, ought to be a generation the most reverend to conscience and faithful to principle that England has ever seen. The Nonconformist who has taken part in its celebration ought, henceforth, as he has never before done, to know the worth, see the beauty, and exemplify the power of his principles. St. Bartholomew's Day, 1862, should mark an epoch in the history of every man who has been privileged to aid in its right and grateful celebration.

#### THE WEIGH HOUSE.

Had our space permitted, we should willingly have inserted the whole, or the greater part at least, of Mr. Binney's sermon (which we had it in our power to have done), but that being impossible, we content ourselves with the report which appeared in Monday's *Times*. We correct it a little from our own notes and recollections, and we confirm the concluding statement, that it is an outline only, and that very incomplete, of the preacher's arguments. We the more willingly content ourselves with merely giving this report, as we presume the discourse itself will soon be published. The text was, Romans xiv., part of the 5th and of the 23rd verses, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." "For whatever is not of faith is sin." Mr. Binney began by referring to his sermon of the previous Sunday, the anniversary of the day when many of the ejected ministers addressed their flocks for the last time. On this, the anniversary of the day on which their pulpits were vacant, their voices hushed, and their people in most cases like sheep without a shepherd, he thought it might be well to consider the significance of their act of secession. It stood out in the annals of England as marking a crisis in the religious and political development of things, and it might be found an inquiry more than



curious to look at what it was, what it indicated, what preceded, and what followed it. In the history of the progress of opinion we might often observe three stages. There might be, in the first place, the stagnation, the acquiescence, or the unanimity of ignorance; then there would come the disturbance and the conflict of inquiry, and not until all these had passed came the repose and the unanimity of knowledge or love. The event of 1662 took its character from the times which had preceded it. It belonged to the period of inquiry and discussion, and it was the crisis and close of a stormy portion of it. He would take them back to a time which lay behind the fourteenth century, and in which, he might assume, there was the unanimity of ignorance. The national understanding and conscience were tramped into the dust by the foot of authority and kept quiescent by external force which created and encouraged mental stagnation. In that state of things a ray of light appeared in the sky, a star became visible in the murky firmament overhead; in other words, by the preaching of Wickliffe, "the Morning Star of the Reformation," an influence was exercised, inquiry was awakened, and "the new doctrine," as his message was called, was received. Of course, there was controversy, agitation, conflict; but that was not to be lamented. Better life and light, agitation and progress, with confusion and war, than the stagnation of death and the peace of the grave. The first movement and agitation in the mind of the nation at that remote period was the clamour for doctrinal truth, pure and simple, and thus previous unanimity was disturbed. It was the heart of the people of England crying for truth, in opposition to the incrustations which were supposed to be grafted on the primitive Evangel. Certain ideas, however, which afterwards became prominent in relation to the ministry and the Church found utterance and embodiment in the words of Wickliffe. Coincident with that cry for truth there was the utterance of these secondary ideas which became matter afterwards of controversy. Wickliffe boldly declared that, by the ordinances of Christ, priests and bishops were all one, and that in the time of St. Paul two orders were sufficient—priest and deacon. The next advance in that secondary period was under Henry VIII., when, after being the defender and advocate of the Papacy, he became an ecclesiastical reformer, and the battle became a contest for national independence. First, the agitation was a cry out of the heart of the common people for truth, but when it got into the hands of the King it was a battle for national independence. Henry cast off the authority of the Pope and claimed for himself and his people freedom from foreign jurisdiction; and he was right. It was at this stage that Papist and Protestants alike suffered, and often at the same stake, the one as a heretic, for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation, the other as a traitor, for opposing the ecclesiastical supremacy of the King. Omitting the reign of Mary, another advance in inquiry was made in the time of Edward VI., culminating eventually in the state of things under the Commonwealth. This was the Puritan agitation—the battle for further reformation, for greater precision in the Protestant creed, and greater simplicity in the Church rites and clerical habits. During this long period the Puritans were constantly asking relief from things practically oppressive. They were oppressed, insulted, and persecuted, but they continued nevertheless to increase both in numbers and weight. It was a curious fact that in the convocation which met in 1562, just 300 years ago, in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, the Puritan element was so strong that many of the members distinguished for high ecclesiastical office were anxious and earnest for ritual reform. A proposition was made to do away with all saints' days, for omitting the sign of the cross in baptism, and for the discontinuance of the use of organs and so forth. That was 300 years ago, and the proposition was carried by a majority of eight of those present, but when afterwards proxies were admitted to be used for the absentees the decision was reversed by a majority of one. So very near was the Church of Elizabeth of being marked and modified by Puritan opinion. Every one familiar with the history of the reign of James I. would remember how he browbeat the Puritans and threatened to harry them out of the land. For 100 years the Puritans were persecuted. Many were deprived of their livings, and many sought refuge beyond the seas; while at the same time they were so oppressed they saw the Church deteriorated both in creed and worship by doctrinal defects and Popish innovations. Side by side with ecclesiastical abuses the process of political degeneracy went on in the ill-fated and arbitrary conduct of the King, until the patience and forbearance of the people were exhausted, and they rose up determined to obtain reformation and redress. So up to this point the period of inquiry has gone on, marked as such periods always are by manifold agitations. On looking back to the time to which he was now referring, there were two or three things which, for a right understanding of the subject, must not be overlooked. First, the contest was one within the Church; all the time that internal struggle was going on there were bodies of separatists, more or less numerous, detaching themselves and taking the form of distinct congregations; but into their case he did not enter. Again, it was to be noticed that the contest itself was of the nature of a struggle between conservatism and progress, the one party clinging to doctrines and forms, ecclesiastical arrangements and practices which the other deemed superstitious or erroneous, and wished to supersede so as to bring things into greater harmony, as it thought, with primitive truth and apostolical order. Besides, both parties looked to the secular power for support, and both sought the royal or Parliamentary oppression of the other. When things came to a death-struggle in the middle of 1662 the Royal patronage of the one party was changed to the Parliamentary patronage of the other. The principle was the same, though the agency was different. So things continued till the turn of the tide, which brought back again to their old moorings the remnants or representatives of the past age. Then it was, at the Restoration, that there might have been a comprehensive arrangement and mutual concessions, which would have shown that each party had profited by its own vicissitudes; but such was not the temper of the times. The fact was that there never was an intention on the part of the bishops to do anything but to get rid of their old adversaries, and on the part of the adversaries there was too much desire to introduce into the Church functional changes. Had wisdom and love presided on the occasion, such a temporary arrangement might have

been carried out as would have gone far to secure the comprehension of the Presbyterian clergy; but it never was contemplated, and after they had been trifled with and cajoled in various ways, the State, directed, stimulated, inspired by the Church, passed an act offering them terms of accommodation, which could not be accepted without dishonour. The Act of Uniformity, he thought he might say, was the climax and close of one of the divisions of the period of inquiry of which he had been speaking. It was not the close of the period itself—at least, not for the nation. The English mind, considered as a whole, is passing through the conflict of enquiry still, and will have to do so for a long time yet before it reaches the unanimity either of knowledge or of love. For those who can conscientiously conform the period of enquiry with respect to many things is finished and done with. They have passed beyond that, and are now in possession of positive, ascertained, absolute truth, or they ought to be. In one sense it might be admitted that what was required of the successors of the Puritan clergy—remembering that they would have had to give up or profess to give up the convictions of years, to accept and submit to what they had so long and so strenuously resisted, to say they believed in words addressed to either God or man what they did not believe, and to promise and practise what they thought repugnant to Christian simplicity—it might be admitted, he said, that for them to have done that, or half or quarter of it, would have been so monstrous that refusal to do it was no great virtue. Be it so. They had many defects; some that were their own, and some that belonged to the age in which they lived. Leaving the men themselves out of view, without dealing in panegyric or eulogy about them, let him consider the thing that they did, and what significance it had. What the Act of Uniformity required might be stated in a few words. It required a public declaration of unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer, the administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, together with the Psalter, and the form or manner of ordaining and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons. It required also the taking of an oath of canonical obedience and of subjection to the ordinary according to the canons of the Church. It further required the abjuration of the Solemn League and Covenant, and a distinct declaration of the unlawfulness, under any pretence whatever, to take up arms against the King. These requirements involved the abandonment of everything of moment which the men had ever professed or done, and the acceptance of much that was directly contrary to their known convictions. Admit that there was no great heroism in refusing what would have involved the most flagrant immorality, even though it entailed the loss of all things, still there might be a significance in the fact that the thing was done and the suffering sustained, that might be well worthy of lasting remembrance. The demand and the penalty were the natural issue of a wrong principle admitted and acted on by every dominant party of the day. The establishment of a church and the enforcement of a creed by secular authority was a common principle with Papists and Protestants, priests and presbyters in these old times. Whichever religious party had the supremacy, it thought itself the dictator of the religion of the nation, and its adoption was to be enforced by penal enactments. But if it was wrong for Mary to act on that principle, it was wrong for Elizabeth. If it was right to enforce the acceptance of the "Directory," it might be right to enforce the use of the Prayer-book. Much might be said on behalf of the Presbyterian in mitigation of judgment, but it must be admitted that a wrong principle was common alike to the two great Protestant parties—viz., that the supreme power in the State, whatever it might be, was to be relied on for the support and enforcement of the faith. Again, the conduct of the Nonconformists, whatever there might have been to lessen its lustre, brought before us in many ways the reverence which was due to conscience, by man to man's, and by each man to his own. Their friends, if he might not call them forefathers, were so circumstanced that they were obliged to look at oaths and subscriptions with a deep seriousness and a steady gaze. To them those things were a solemn reality. They meant something. They could not be trifled with. Everything was then fresh from those who expected it to be taken to signify what it said. The very canons at which so many people now smiled as antiquated were at that period comparatively fresh. It was only by the lapse of time that oaths and subscription became formalities and got to be looked on as meaning nothing. There were men now, at this very day, who never thought seriously of what they had done, and would do it again, who, if some new test were proposed to them, or some new form of declaration required, would refuse and resist, whatever might be the consequence. Whether of itself it should be permitted to modify the aspect of things as to deaden the sense of moral obligation, he would not inquire; but that it did so was patent to all. There were principles and expressions in the baptismal and other services, in some of the rubrics, and in the office for the burial of the dead, which the Nonconformists could not admit or approve, or which they strongly condemned or utterly denied, and which therefore they would not subscribe or profess. The lesson taught should not be lost, especially in the present day, when the secret seemed to be possessed by some, how subscription might be harmonised with the denial of almost everything subscribed. The conduct of the men had in it the germ of many things which had since been developed, and of much that was now secured by law. They would not strip themselves of the liberty to endeavour to remove abuses either from Church or State. They would not assert that there could not possibly be in the realm of England congregations of Christian men that might not be called churches, besides the Church established by law. Their convictions have not been without result, though the men had much to suffer from subsequent penal and persecuting laws. Their principles in time bore abundantly their legitimate fruit. They justified resistance to arbitrary power. They led to the Act of Toleration and ultimately secured the liberty of worship which their descendants now enjoy. Had not the Nonconformists resisted in one century there would have been no clear stage for the missionary movements of Wesley and Whitfield in the next. The effect of the ejectionment on the English Church was a century and more of deadness, a wilderness of dreary formality and hollow profession which

followed the casting out of the Puritan leaven. All that ought to be a lesson to every religious community to beware of giving way to revengeful feelings, of humiliating a rival, or vexing a brother. While he must sorrowfully confess that they were still only now in the second stage of the progress of opinion, and that it would be a long time yet before the Christian church advanced to the third, let them all try to hasten the period of "the good time coming," if it was ever to come. There never would be in religion the unanimity of knowledge in the sense of scientific demonstration. Especially was that true in respect to those secondary things in which Christians might differ who were one in faith, but which had been too often made the watchwords of schism and the instruments of tyranny; but there might be and ought to be the unanimity of love. There might be a distinct recognition of the right to differ, and a mutual respect between those who differed. Our rule for others should be, where there is nothing to throw suspicion on their integrity, "to their own Master they stand or fall." The rule of each for himself must be, "be fully persuaded"—that is intelligently informed and rationally convinced, for "whatsoever was not of faith" in this full and enlightened persuasion "was sin." Let all of every church carry that with them, whether Conformists or Nonconformists, and in that way they would all do something in heralding the approach of the unanimity of love.

The discourse, of which the above is little more than a summary, was listened to throughout with very marked attention, and appeared to make a profound impression on the vast congregation.

#### SURREY CHAPEL.

Several lectures and sermons have been delivered here on the subject of the Bicentenary celebration. On the first Sunday evening in February, the Rev. Newman Hall took for the theme of his monthly lecture to young men, "The Supremacy of Conscience, and the Word of God as its Sole Director in Religion." The March lecture on Sunday evening was a narrative of the expulsion of the 2,000 as an illustration of faith. On the Monday evening following, Mr. N. Hall lectured to working men on the political phase of the event, showing England's obligation to the Puritans for civil liberty. Mr. Carvell Williams addressed another large assembly of working-men, in the same place, on "The Two St. Bartholomew Days." The April lecture to young men, on the first Sunday evening, was a sketch of the life and character of the Rev. Joseph Alleine, as a personal illustration of the principles involved. As he would be absent from home on the 24th, Mr. Newman Hall delivered his St. Bartholomew sermon as a lecture to young men, on Sunday evening, August 3, from the words, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." He spoke of liberty ecclesiastical as the best guardian of liberty doctrinal, and this as the instrument of liberty spiritual. In these lectures, Mr. Newman Hall stated that it was not necessary that we should agree in the scruples of the Puritans in order to honour them for their conscientiousness; it was not a question to be asked, who did and who did not exactly inherit their opinions and thus had a right to honour them: they were the property of the entire church; every Christian, of every denomination, ought to do them honour. For his own part, he would have celebrated their Christian heroism had they differed essentially from himself in their ecclesiastical views; and that such thorough-going uprightness and truth as theirs was wanted by us in all departments, in commerce and politics as well as in religion. At the same time, in honouring them they must not be regarded as the only conscientious men of their time. Those who did unfeignedly assent and consent to everything in the Book of Common Prayer, were to be regarded as conscientious in remaining in the Church, as those who did not unfeignedly assent and consent would be wicked if they did not come out. There ought to be no diminution of brotherly love in consequence of this celebration. On the contrary, all Christians should vie with each other in honouring the 2,000, and imitating their high-toned conscientiousness. During the present year, the congregation are making special efforts to raise a sum of money in place of 8,000*l.* bequeathed by Rowland Hill to purchase the freehold, but which bequest has been annulled by Chancery as a violation of mortmain. The subscription has already reached about 2,000*l.*

#### CRAVEN CHAPEL, GOLDEN SQUARE.

The Rev. John Graham took for his text in the morning Galatians v. 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." The preacher remarked at the commencement of his discourse, that in all human minds, but especially in the noblest, God had implanted the desire of liberty for the free development of all their powers. Jesus came to deliver the soul from its bondage, and give the freedom which rejoices that others are free. If they considered the nature of the liberty they would see the connection between this subject and the present celebration. First, Christ came to give liberty of conscience, and to free the soul from the bonds of conscious guilt. By direct approach of the soul to God, through the one Mediator, all circuitous and dubious pardons were dispensed with for ever, and the grand stroke was dealt at the root of priestly power, and exacting turnpikes were for ever struck from the highway of salvation. Christ also gave true liberty of will, and true liberty of thought, and true liberty of worship, by abolishing the stereotyped systems of the ceremonial law and setting free the human spirit to worship God under any decent form in spirit and in truth. No man was now at liberty to interpose his chosen form on another and crush



the free expression of God's Spirit in his child. He had given the church the liberty of worship. Secondly, the importance of this liberty was so great that every Christian owed it to himself to persevere in it. He owed it also to his fellow-men. We owed much to those who battled for our political rights, but unspeakably more to those who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods that the truth of the Gospel might continue with us. We owed the jealous conservation of this liberty as a duty also to God who had himself bought it for us. The command to "stand fast" implied, however, danger of retrogression. The Jewish bigots had sought to bring weak souls under the bondage of the law, and persecuted to the death the nonconformists. Sense, hatred, prejudice, carnality, and unbelief had ever sought to crush true Christian freedom, but never made greater efforts to do so than when the Two Thousand were ejected. The preacher proceeded to state some of the principal circumstances of the ejection. Even the *Times* newspaper confessed the propriety of celebrating such unworldly piety. "We," concluded Mr. Graham, "honour their memory. We hold up to a too lax age the example of their uncompromising truthfulness. We utter no judgment of the consciences of brethren who subscribe formularies which the Two Thousand could not, and which we cannot yet; we wonder at the act of subscribing words which clearly expresses what the subscriber, as he tells us, disbelieves. We dread the corrupting effects of such action by teachers on the social and commercial morality of the taught. We deeply lament the act, but conscience we do not judge. But we do honour the holy men who made such sacrifice for truth and conscience' sake, as did the St. Bartholomew Two Thousand. We thank God for the progress of freedom since then; and we exhort you to prove your admiration of them, and your gratitude to Him whose grace supported them—your practical gratitude by contributing liberally to the Bicentenary Fund. The spacious chapel was filled in every part, and the deepest attention was paid to the discourse of the preacher. The admirable organ and choir and psalmody of Craven Chapel prove that Nonconformity is not necessarily associated with neglect of cultured harmonious praise. The sermon in the evening was on the "Function of conscience, and the way to keep it." The collections, including donations from the pastor, deacons, and a few friends, amounted to at least 100*l*.

#### SOUTHWARK.—REV. JOHN WADDINGTON, D.D.

In the morning the text was taken from Hebrews xii. 1, 2. 1. The cloud of witnesses: their unity, number, proximity, and our relation to them in fellowship as receivers of their testimony and as taking up their work to advance it to another stage for those that shall come after us. 2. Our present course of duty, "the race that is set before us," personally, collectively, and the necessity for energy and patience. 3. The grand incentive to perseverance—"Looking unto Jesus." The preacher illustrated the subject by facts in the history of the Bartholomew Confessors derived from unpublished documents. In the evening Dr. Waddington preached a second sermon on the same subject, from 2 Corinthians xiii. 8, "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." 1. "The truth as a divine revelation accompanied with infallible proofs of its authenticity, and complete for all the purposes for which it was given, demands attention due to no other communication. 2. As an unerring standard of appeal, we should submit all religious systems to its test. 3. As the supreme law it requires, under all circumstances, implicit and universal obedience. 4. As the word of salvation, it should be received with grateful welcome that should not suffer us for any consideration to tamper with its contents, and as the most precious and sacred trust, it is essential in fidelity that we should give evidence at all times of unfeigned sincerity, evince the deepest sympathy with the spiritual condition of all men, and act in simple dependence on God. The preacher showed the importance of the Bartholomew testimony from the flagrant instances of dishonesty in the commercial world, and the want of devotion to principle in the Church. Dr. Owen anticipated the state of things exhibited in the "Essays and Reviews." "The disputes that have been amongst us about doing things with a doubting conscience upon the command of superiors, and consenting unto the use of things which we approve not of themselves, tend all to atheism and the eternal dishonour of Christian religion, begetting a frame of mind which all honest brethren would scorn." Dr. Waddington, in conclusion, adverted to the struggle of the church in Southwark for the last twelve years, and to its present hopeful position.

#### CANONBURY CHAPEL, ISLINGTON.

This place of worship was crowded to excess, it being difficult to obtain a seat after the service had commenced. After a most appropriate prayer, the preacher took for his text Psalm cv. latter part of 45th verse, "Praise ye the Lord." The following is an outline of a very remarkable and original discourse:—

This is the last note of five Psalms; they all end in this high strain. The Psalm contains reference to everything in the providence and grace of God connected with the history of the Israelites. But the words have respect to all dispensations in all times, and are therefore a good text for us this day, in which we commemorate the reign of conscience as supreme in the hearts and lives of men. Let us praise the Lord—

1. For His providence overruling and guiding all human affairs. Like the Israelites, we have had a

troubled history; and if we look only at the things which have happened, we might say there is not much ground for praise, but on the contrary much for shame, humiliation, and dismay. We see constant violations of truth, charity, candour, even by Christian men, in the history of our national religious life. Many amiably pious people hardly like to think God has much to do with these troublous scenes, and therefore there can be little ground for praise; that he retires from such scenes of human conflict until men humble themselves and repent. This is not the doctrine of the Bible. Here God is "over all, through all, and in all," pursuing his grand world plan to its ultimate issue of "glory in the highest." This doctrine that God is here, and not there, would leave the world without a ruler, and would hand over the heathen to the devil. But God always reigns even when he does not approve. The Lord reigneth, not the devil; he reigns over nothing—not over the heathen, nor yet in hell. There he is, a prisoner, bound fast for ever. Therefore praise the Lord.

2. For those changes and trials by means of which, or through which, our religious liberties have been secured. The struggles of the seventeenth century bear ample fruit among us now. That long dark time of the trial of tested truth prepared these days of truth triumphant. Our present state, on the whole, is one which could only have come out of long and bitter trials. Peaceful charitable souls say, "It is a pity there should have been such persecution, imprisonments and even deaths for conscience' sake;" but we answer that, taking human nature as a whole, our present liberties would have been impossible but for the struggles of our forefathers. We can say to all persecutors, "This is how we obtained our civil and religious liberties, and this is how we shall maintain them;" and persecution, laying aside the sword, says, "We have tried that before, and it failed; it is in vain to make another experiment of putting down free thought by force." Therefore praise the Lord.

3. For the new demonstration given in these periods of our history to the divinity of Christianity. The history of Christianity is a history of conflict; so was the history of Christ's life; the Church had to follow the Lamb whithersoever he had been. The history of the early Christians was one of conflict; in no other way could Christianity have been established. The world was full of cruelty, despotism, lust, ambition, &c., and these elements of evil could not be soothed to rest in the lullaby of love. Only stern battle could overcome them. The sword, not peace on the earth, was come; and it did come, and was triumphant over every form of error and of sin.

Well, in the history of the period to which we are now referring, we see the same conflict, and in that conflict we have a stronger illustration of the divinity of Christianity than even in apostolic times. For here was conflict, not only between the enemies and friends of Christianity, but between Christians themselves, who had, in the seventeenth century, the worst struggles between them that the page of history records. Fancy Paul writing out a warrant for the apprehension of Peter; fancy the Apostles ordering the pillory to be used upon some dissenting brother; or the concave of the twelve at Jerusalem, with the sacred words of Divine benediction still sounding in their ears, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," passing the Five Mile or Conventicle Act! Why, if it had been done, Christianity would have died out in Judea at once. It was not strong enough to bear it then; but like its Lord and Master, through these conflicts it has risen to perfection and to triumph.

Not that our forefathers were guiltless. Let us be candid. They believed in the sword; in putting grievous pressure on the consciences of others. The doctrine of true liberty was not understood except by a very few. The magistrate and the keys were believed in by most of the Puritans as necessary to put down heresy. But still the persecuting party by pre-eminence was the High-Church party, whose sympathies were with the Church of Rome. Amidst all, Christianity lived on; and so, with us or without us, it will live on to the end of time: therefore, praise the Lord.

4. For the grand exemplification given this day 200 years ago of the power of religion over the consciences of men. Therefore, we commemorate, we approve, we glory in the memory of that day. It would be a seven-fold condemnation of all we profess to hold true, if out of a false spirit of charity we could overlook this day. The preacher then said, "Whatever others might do they could not overlook this day. 200 years ago the Rev. George Cockayne was ejected from St. Pancras Church, and in some quiet room founded the church of which this was the historical succession. Since that day they had the names and the histories of all the pastors of the church once meeting at Hare-court, and it was no extravagance to say, if that good man had not gone out of the Church they would not have been worshipping at Canonbury that day."

The preacher then pointed out some of the elements of greatness exemplified in the Nonconformity of the Two Thousand.

1. They were all good men. They are called ejected—literally they were not; they went out. Parliamentary calculations were based upon their goodness; they knew the men would not subscribe what they did not believe; they knew the men were good and true, and right loyal to Christ; and they framed the Act of Uniformity on purpose to meet these conditions of goodness; and rather than be dictated to in matters of conscience the goodness of these men compelled them to secede, that elsewhere, wherever God might direct their steps, they might pursue their labours with a free conscience.

2. They went out quietly. No noise. No demonstration. No arguments. Duty was obeyed with solemn silence.

3. They went out alone. No meetings in solemn convocation to decide upon a plan of action. Possibly in London and in great cities there was much consultation and many prayers, but it was not like the disruption of the Free Church of Scotland. In the country this was impossible. Look at their farewell sermons, happily preserved to us—if there be any difference between them and their ordinary discourses it was in a deeper tenderness, a more appealing love to their consciences; a grander statement of the real Gospel; and so they went out and wandered about as fugitives, watched by spies, often brought before magistrates and cast into noisome prisons, amidst all which trials the burden and agony of their spirits was the enforced silence on the great matters of man's salvation. In the name of honesty let

us not be afraid to call this Act of Uniformity most cruel; but liberty came through these sufferers to us, and therefore we embalm their names and honour their memory.

The sermon was concluded by the following practical observations, as gathered from Puritan history:—1. Here is a lesson of absolute trust in God; he can meet with no check, no disappointment, in all his mighty plans for his own glory and man's benefit. 2. Always look with great expectation to scenes of turmoil and distress, for out of such scenes God always elaborates his greatest glories. 3. Learn the absolute futility of persecution. It cannot destroy error; it only gives it a false vitality; and to truth, it make it strike its roots deeper and firmer than ever in the ground. 4. Let us be grateful to God for the heritage of civil and religious liberty handed down to us by our forefathers, and value this heritage beyond all price as the palladium of all our civil and ecclesiastical freedom.

A collection was subsequently made for the proposed Congregational Memorial Hall.

#### HIGHBURY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Rev. Dr. Edmond, of Highbury United Presbyterian Church, took for his text Hebrews xi. 2, "For by it (faith) the elders obtained a good report." He said it was not his design to tell the story of the ejection. His object would be to look at the great principle by which the confessors of 1662 had been actuated, and to commend it by their example and by that of the older worthies named in this chapter to the adoption of all in their own life-struggles. With a mere passing reference to the Presbyterianism of the majority of the Two Thousand, the preacher went on to describe the faith by which their forefathers won their honoured name, the confident persuasion of an unseen world, present and future—of God and glory to come. This faith he proceeded to illustrate, as it was exemplified in the elders of the Apostolic fame-roll, contained in the chapter—as exemplified in the elders of Bartholomew's Day, 1662—and as it ought to be exemplified in us, the juniors of the present age. In the discussion of the second head, he drew a picture of the conflict between sense and faith—between present earthly gain and principle, through which the ministers of the exodus must have passed. In concluding, he said that the prominent part taken by Nonconformists in the celebration of this Bicentenary commemoration had been in some quarters reckoned for an offence.

But surely the fact was not to be wondered at. In the ranks of Dissenting churches there were unquestionably not a few who occupied the position they held, not because they had seen anything in the Church of England forbidding conformity, but from attachment to some particular ministry or the fellowship or the membership of some particular church. But the great body were Nonconformists for conscience' sake, and of these it might safely be said that, had they lived in 1662, the same convictions that keep them out of the Church now must have brought them out then; while, on the other hand, were the seceders of 1662 now alive, they would necessarily remain out of the pale of the Established Church, for the same reasons which brought them out of it. To the Nonconformists of two centuries ago, and those of the present day, there were such convictions in common that they must stand side by side, so far as separation from the National Church is concerned, whether you take back the juniors of the modern day to the age of the elders, or bring down the seniors of the past to the present times of the younger men. Was it unwarrantable, in that case, to speak of the two as predecessors and successors, notwithstanding differences of sentiment on other points between them. But when he said successors, he meant thus far succession in form only and position. Something more was needed to make succession in spirit. This very Bicentenary celebration would condemn those who took part in it, unless they imbibed and practised the great principles which wrought in the men whose sacrifice for conscience' sake they had risen to honour. Let them beware of expending all their admiration in monumental praise; let their lives speak—let the memory of 1662 make them all more faithful to the Unseen; more true, more earnest, more holy; and before the cloud of witnesses they had invoked around them, and before the world, let them the more lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them. For, after all, it was not the building the tombs of the prophets and the garnishing of the sepulchres of the righteous, that did them the honour, but the taking up their work for God, and carrying forward to a further stage of advancement the cause for which they toiled, or suffered, or fell.

#### CLAREMONT CHAPEL.

The Rev. A. M. Henderson preached two sermons on the subject of the day. The text for the morning was Acts iv. 19, 20. The subject was, "The Reasons for Nonconformity." The reasons given by the ejected were presented, and further illustrated by the preacher's own convictions, who, though educated with a view to the ministry of the Established Church, was obliged to become a Nonconformist on account of the dangerous errors contained in the Prayer-book. Special stress was laid on the Ordination Service, with its blasphemous assumption that the bishop can give or withhold the Holy Ghost. The reasons for this assumed power, the administration of sacraments, and priestly absolution next engaged attention. The preacher showed the true sense of the expressions used in the Prayer-book, exposed the unscriptural character of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and its companion dogma, and concluded by showing that in both these the Established Church of this country harmonises with Rome in placing the salvation of men in priestly acts, imparting regeneration and pardon. The Confirmation and Burial Services, as sustaining the same views, received some attention; and the sermon



concluded with an appeal to the unregenerate founded on Scripture, and to the regenerate to hold fast the truth.

In the evening the texts were, Gal. vi. 7, 8, and Psalm xxvi. 10. The subject was, "The Ejection of the Nonconformists of 1662: its Results and Lessons." After some remarks on the Act of Uniformity, with those which soon followed, and on the fact that the Nonconformists did not require to be forcibly ejected, the results to them were pointed out. The results to the Established Church itself in ignorance, profaneness, and spiritual paralysis, were shown on the testimonies of Bishop Burnet, Southey, Marsden, Archdeacon Hare, Canon Miller, and others. The results to England in infidelity and profligacy were shown in a review of the history and literature of the Restoration, and in special quotations from Bishops Burnet and Butler, and Archbishop Secker. The present divided condition of the Establishment was adduced in proof that the Act of Uniformity had failed of its end, and also the fact that in 1851 the Nonconformists of England provided nearly as much accommodation for worship as the Establishment, though no tithes or church-rates sustained them, and although they had less than 200 years to accomplish what occupied the others since the introduction of Christianity. The lessons of love to truth, faithfulness to conscience, gratitude for religious freedom, and testimony against the connexion between Church and State, were followed by an appeal to extend the principles of the confessions of 1662.

The collections for the Memorial Hall amounted to upwards of 324.

#### POULTRY CHAPEL.

The Rev. T. T. Waterman, B.A., preached in the morning from Acts xxiv. 16, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." After referring to conscientiousness as a characteristic of Paul's life, he directed attention to it as the guiding principle of the 2,000 ejected ministers. The preacher then proceeded with his discourse under the following heads:—1. "The superior piety of the men who were faithful to the convictions of conscience." They were men of irreproachable lives—men of great devoutness, exercising unshaken confidence in God, realising his presence, relying upon his word, seeking his guidance and blessing in all things; witness their soliloquies, covenants, and prayers. They were men of deep acquaintance with the Scriptures; witness their confessions of faith, expositions of Scripture, and theological treatises. They were men of conscientious devotedness to the cause of Christ. Before the ejection they were diligent workers in their several spheres, and afterwards were unwilling to lay aside their ministry, showing themselves to be true followers of Christ. What they were, they were by the grace of God; which was available for us and would enable us to attain to their excellence. 2. "The special occasion which called forth the exhibition of their fidelity to conscience." After pointing out the stringency of the Act of Uniformity, precluding evasion or mental reservation, and the severity of the penalties of non-subscription, the preacher dwelt for a short time on the chief objection felt by the non-subscribers to declare their assent and consent to the Prayer-book. Noticing some of the more prominent objectionable portions of the Book, he asked how could they assent to them? how could they declare that there was nothing contrary to the word of God? how could they conform? He then urged corresponding fidelity to conscience in the present day in respect to conformity to the Established Church and conformity to the world. 3. "The spirit in which they carried out the convictions of conscience." We might approve their conscientiousness, but not the spirit in which they acted; in this, however, they were exemplary. They were not actuated by a spirit of disloyalty to the king, nor by a schismatical spirit. They exhibited a spirit of conciliation and concession before the passing of the act. They sought reconciliation, comprehension, and the removal of occasions of stumbling and offence. They endeavoured "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The tenor of their farewell discourses showed that they had learned "to be gentle, showing all meekness unto all men." After their ejection there was no attempt at retaliation. There was a holy determination to avoid sin, and an earnest desire to know the will of God and to abide by it. After quoting passages from their writings in confirmation of this, the preacher expressed his hope that in carrying out our convictions there would be the manifestation of a similar Christian spirit. He then made a brief reference to (4), "The sacrifices they made in carrying out their convictions." They never regretted the course they took, nor the sacrifices they made, even to the last. They were "faithful unto death." He concluded with an exhortation to "be followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises, laying aside every weight," &c.

#### TONBRIDGE CHAPEL, EUSTON-ROAD.

In this place, the Rev. J. R. Kilsby Jones delivered a series of six Wednesday evening lectures, which were well attended first and last. These were succeeded by a course of four Sunday evening lectures, the third of which, on "The Two Thousand," was delivered last Sabbath. Mr. Jones chose for his text or motto, as he called it, a line from Heb. xi. 38—"Of whom the world was not worthy." At the beginning, he said that those who attended the week-day lectures would witness that he had treated his subject without bitterness, that there was no un-

seemly unjustifiable attack on those who might differ from him. He certainly did not spare his own party, his object being simply to ascertain the exact truth in regard to those extraordinary struggles that took place in this country centuries ago. He confessed, in fact, that he had little sectarian zeal about him. It would not for a moment be supposed that he had lived so long in the world without perceiving that Dissenters were far from perfect, and that the voluntary system was not worth much unless worked by genuine Christian gentlemen. He thought this preliminary admission necessary before proceeding to consider the merits or defects of other systems. He then traced historically the causes which conspired to divide the High Church party and the Puritans, the passing of the Uniformity Act, and the disruption of the Two Thousand on that day two centuries ago. From the Prayer-book, which these men refused to acknowledge in harmony with the Word of God, he read and commented on the passages having reference to the doctrines of baptismal regeneration, the absolution of sin, and the burial of the dead. Evangelical ministers to-day, who have subscribed to these doctrines, say they do not preach them. He (Mr. Jones) had simply to say that he could not on any account subscribe to them, and far less subscribe to them and teach the contrary. At the same time, he made no imputations on those who did; they might be conscientious; it was wholly a matter between them and their God. Touching on the Five-mile Act and the Conventicle Act, he read extracts from the farewell addresses and other sayings of the Dissenters which have been preserved, to prove how sincerely conscientious they were in taking the decisive step, and how nobly and patiently its consequences were borne. In conclusion he said the world was indebted to these men, and, in the first place, because they recognised before the world and all times, that there was such a thing as the human conscience—which has claims superior to every other monitor on earth, which is not to be silenced by any temporal advantages. That is a great matter. There were living, two centuries ago, two thousand men who did really believe in God and in God's truth, and who were prepared to make any sacrifice rather than renounce their belief. Honest conviction is respected everywhere, whatever it may be; and when backed by undeniable self-sacrifice, is more than respected, for no hypocrite makes sacrifices—his hypocrisy ends with its advantages. Many a man, also, is a hero by the fireside and a coward in the day of battle; but these Two Thousand proved their sincerity of thought by unequivocal acts. They really did believe in something higher than all earthly advantages. And it is a great thing, for the world at large, to know that there were men found believing in the Invisible to their present disadvantage. It is due to such men, wherever found, that we owe all in this world worth having. He lost all patience—he was guilty of the most intolerant irritation, when he came into contact with people who, enjoying the far-off fruits of noble self-sacrifices, yet disparage the men who made them. Superficial observers may talk as much as they please about the fanatical Puritans, the hypocrisy of Cromwell (as if any kind of greatness and hypocrisy were in any degree compatible!), the nasal twang, and the absurd Scriptural names. Even such a man as Hume, who knew nothing of religion, who had no reverence of mind, was compelled to ascribe much of the existing liberties of England to the conduct of the ridiculed Puritans. He (Mr. Jones) hoped it would soon be more commonly and universally understood that we are living on the self-sacrifices of our predecessors. It is grand to live in England to-day; it would have been altogether different but for the conscientious adherence to right of such men as the Two Thousand. Shall we not be grateful to them? One of the modes of gratitude was to make admiring, reverential mention of their deeds and names. He then showed that the disruption, though it looked a formidable calamity to the Church of England, did not really injure it. It was overruled for good. The Church has copied many of the tactics of the Dissenters, it is very active, and never had a better class of ministers than it has now. It really seems that, in order to keep zeal and activity alive, there should be something like competition among sects. If there was only one sect it would be in inevitable danger of becoming sleepy and indifferent. He was, however, sorry that this year had produced so much bitter controversy, but it would be productive of much counterbalancing good if it ended in united efforts on every hand to do away entirely with subscription, to trust entirely to the Word of God, and allow the preacher to put his own interpretation on the written word. He entered at some length on his objections to subscription, and said that personally whoever came to him with interpretations he would order aside; he would permit no man to interpose between him and the Master's own word. This subscription was absurd, for it attempted an impossibility, inasmuch as it expected men to think and express themselves alike in a world, every physical and moral feature of which was distinguished by variety. It was unreasonable, because it was framed two centuries ago, when this country had hardly emerged from the darkness of Popery, when the right of private judgment was not understood as now, and the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures not so clearly perceived as now. Mr. Jones concluded by saying that he hoped the day was near at hand when all men would agree on this one point—that while it is necessary to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, it is still more absolutely necessary to render to God the things that are God's.

#### REGENT-SQUARE.—THE REV. W. ARNOT.

In the absence of Dr. Hamilton, the Rev. William Arnot, of Glasgow, preached on Sunday morning to a large assembly. Mr. Arnot remarked that, as he was a stranger to the congregation, and had not more than a general knowledge of the subject which on that day would engage the attention of so many Christian assemblies, he had not prepared a special address. The first Scripture reading of the day was, however, chosen with especial reference to it. With this view Mr. Arnot read from the 2 Chron. xi. 5, 11—17, and from Amos vii. 7—13. The selection of these passages was remarkable for containing the text which Mr. Orton chose in his centenary sermon. Having read them, Mr. Arnot said he had done so in order that the congregation might apply them to the circumstances of the day. He then, in a few brief words, drew a comparison, which Orton also did, between the ejection of Amos and the Levites and that of the Two Thousand. The Levites left their suburbs and possessions for "Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off"; and Amos, at the same time, was commanded to "prophesy not again any more at Beth-el" against Israel, "for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court." Mr. Arnot afterwards preached from 2 Cor. iii. 18.

#### KENTISH TOWN.

The Rev. Edward White took for his text in the morning, Rev. xiv. 13, "I heard a voice from heaven say unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." In the evening Mr. White preached on "Uniformity and Nonconformity," from Matthew xv., "Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders? and Jesus answered, Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" The worth and apparent piety of many Conformists of the present day are such as to render it difficult to speak severely of a Church comprising such characters; and, on the other side, the actual condition of Nonconformity, especially in country districts, is often such as to oblige us to lower our tone when attempting to recommend the merits of its principles. A multitude of small churches, governed by deacons instead of presbyters, by wealth instead of wisdom, often half-starving a single minister, and distracted by divisions and schisms, is not a spectacle fitted to persuade members of the Church of England to become seceders. But there is enough of devout and well-ordered Nonconformity to enable us to demonstrate what would be the operation of our church principles. So long as the Church of England exists it prevents the full display of the working of New Testament Independency. Still Nonconformity with all its faults is one of the most precious jewels in the realm of England. Spiritual freedom generates political liberty, and we owe our civil immunities to the religious heroism of our forefathers. Nonconformity is to be maintained, and, if possible, improved and ennobled, because (1) it secures for the people all the truth enjoyed by the members of the Establishment, in a purer form, and under surer safeguards. So far is it from being true that the absence of formularies tends to produce Unitarianism, the Nonconformists as a body are remarkable for their orthodoxy. The Athanasian Creed makes more Socinians in a twelvemonth than our churches will make in a century. The formularies of the Church of England have not prevented the breaking-up of the Protestant faith among her sons. At this day you can fix neither her clergy or laity to anything in the standard. 2. Nonconformity is to be maintained as a protest against the union of Church and State, which is found on the principle of joining together contradictories, law and grace, violence and forgiveness, Michael and his angels with the Dragon and his angels. The union has proved the fruitful source of social and natural misery in all ages, and is based on a misconception of Jewish history. It leads to a profane and "worldly" mode of thinking of things Divine, such as is shown in the sale of "livings." 3. Nonconformity is a stand for the exclusive authority of Scripture in the exposition of Christianity, it is a stand for some truths perverted by the Church of England, and it is a stand for prayer in Christian intelligence. It witnesses against the pernicious doctrine of the power of the minister to confer the Holy Ghost in baptism and ordination, a doctrine which neutralises so much of what is true in the formularies. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration lays the foundation of delusion in the laity as to the nature and evidence of conversion; and the doctrine of ordination fills the Church with men who think that the imposition of a bishop's hand will supply the lack of spiritual religion, personal piety, and even common sense. 4. Nonconformity is a stand for honesty and equality in the ministers of the Church, as against a system of equivocal subscription, and against a prelatical episcopacy which is not founded on apostolic authority. The ministers of the Church ought to be patterns of honesty. The Evangelical clergy of this age set an example of trifling with language which is poisoning the whole country with a spirit of dishonesty in word and deed, and ought to be denounced in the sternest manner by all who fear God and believe in judgment to come. But after all is said, Nonconformity is of value only as it enshrines the spirit of genuine goodness and dignified religion. Great principles require great souls to proclaim them. The best protest in favour of these principles is the practice of them. A Nonconformity superior in piety and goodness to the Established Church is the only power that is likely to bring it down. But that which we really need is the removal of both Church and Dissent, and a new



creation on the ruins, out of the rich materials of both.

MORNINGTON CHURCH, HAMPSTEAD-ROAD.

In the morning, the Rev. T. T. Lynch preached from Mark v. 13, "They were about two thousand," contrasting the expulsion of two thousand swine by Christ with the expulsion of the two thousand saints by the Church of England. Possessed by demons, the herd rushed, swift, unanimous and irresistible into the sea, like a great democracy urged by the universal suffrage of its own passions. Here was a sacrifice of property in casting forth the spirit of evil. The Church cast out a spirit of good at the sacrifice of good men and their families, who were the choicest members of the society which thrust them out. The result of Christ's miracle was that the redeemed demoniac was found clothed in his right mind, sitting at the feet of Infinite Love. The result of the Church's act of vindictive violence was that she sat down, her raiment washed in other men's tears, at the feet of a base and cruel tyranny. By this act, however, a real gain has accrued to the spiritual life of England. It has brought about two results,—that the Parliamentary Church can never be the National Church—and that a dry, logical Protestantism can never tyrannise over English thought. The Puritans, if they had succeeded, would have bound us in the fetters of scholasticism,—they were many of them good, yet intolerant men,—the Westminster Assembly, to which many of them had belonged, was at best but a wrangling assembly. While, therefore, standing firmly by Puritanism, it is not to be identified with Christianity. It struggled with the evils in the Church, and partially succeeded. The Act of Uniformity was an act of retaliation for these successes—a cruel stroke of vengeance, in which the Puritans were punished for both the good and the evil which they had done. The preacher then referred to the alliance of Church and State, and to the possibility of a happy approximation of Church and Dissent. If any alliance is possible, it must be because the distinctive principles of Church and State may mutually interpenetrate in the government of society. The ultimate principles of the two differ. The State compels: the Church persuades. The State rests on power: the Church on thought. The State manages an outward sphere: the Church rules the hearts and consciences of men. The boon of the State is protection to person and property: the boon of the Church is life itself. But as the organisation of the Church develops it gathers round it an outward and permanent order, and becomes a State within the State. And if the State has so far effected the good which it seeks, that the law is obeyed willingly and intelligently, the principle of the Church comes into the State, and there is no limit to the amount of approximation or identification that may thus be attained. The perverted alliance of Church and State, when selfish policy in the State is wedded to a devilish spirit in the Church, partially obscures and partially reveals the true alliance. If we could remove the Parliamentary grip from the State Church, and infuse free principle, it would of itself develop, it would not freeze all the lesser churches into a dead, frozen lump of uniformity; other churches would not physically coalesce, but stand in friendly relation to it. And then Independency, Presbyterianism, and Episcopacy would probably be found to be all three true, all necessary, for a complete expression of Christian life and thought.

In the evening, the Rev. S. Cox, the secretary of the Central United Bartholomew Committee, preached from Mark x. 29, 30. He showed that the surrender of earthly kinships and possessions at the call of conscience is no real loss; because Christ may give directly, without them, all that he gives indirectly by them; because all that they represent and typify may be had without them; because a legal title is not the highest form of possession. A man's property is what he can appropriate, and his power of appropriation is according to the quality of his life. The two thousand Puritan confessors realised this. To them there came Christ's separating call, Sell all—give up all. They had grace to obey. They gave up houses and lands—cosy parsonage and fertile glebe; they resigned themselves, and, harder still, their wives and children, to biting penury; they vacated the pulpits in which they had long and faithfully administered the Word of Life, that they might follow Christ in the white robes of an unstained conscience. And they had their reward. It is very true that they were persecuted, sometimes to the death, and at other times so hardly entreated that death itself would have been a relief. But you will remember that "persecutions" are enumerated among the other good things of the promise; they form part of the reward. If any ask why, the experience of the Puritans helps us to an answer. Persecutions are catalogued with houses and lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, because these also are God's ministers for our good; because they help to unfold, and cleanse, and uplift the faculties and affections of the soul; because they swell the volume of that hidden life which is the very essence of the promised reward. The Puritans were men of a higher stamp, more like to perfect men in Christ after they had left the Church than when they ministered at its altars. "Persecutions" snapped the fetters which had bound their thoughts and sympathies. Sorrow conched their eyes so that they saw more, and more clearly; it softened and purified their hearts, attuning them to a diviner charity. Hence they took the spoiling of their goods joyfully,

enduring as seeing Him who is invisible. Once hard, bigoted, intolerant, they became gentle, catholic, liberal. Nor were they without other recompenses. They received—as their memoirs avouch—directly from the providence of God all, and more than all, of good they had been accustomed to receive from the possessions and relationships which they had been compelled to resign. They laid a broader, stronger grasp on those celestial relationships and possessions of which all earthly properties and kinships are dull, faint shadows. By virtue of the higher life which suffering brought them, they appropriated larger spiritual revenues from the great universal inheritance of the sons of God. But, beside and beyond all these, they received the very reward which of all others they would have chosen for themselves. Devoted to the service of Christ, finding in that service their highest good, they went out from the Church grieving most of all that they were no longer suffered to speak in his name. They have left pathetic lamentations on their "dumb mouths and silent Sabbaths." But their act of faithful self-sacrifice preached a sermon more eloquent and persuasive than any of the crabbed, scholastic discourses which fell from their lips, and to which the men of that age listened with a patient delight we cannot share. And it preaches that sermon still—preaches it to an enlarging congregation.

HOLLOWAY.

In the morning, the Rev. Mark Wilks, the new pastor of the Congregational Church, Holloway, preached the second time since his settlement. After a sermon which touched incidentally on the ejection, he stated that on the following Sunday there would be a Bicentenary collection on behalf of the Lancashire operatives.

In the evening there was a crowded attendance to hear the special sermon announced in the morning, bearing on the day's commemoration. The preacher having read from Ephesians iv. 5, the words of St. Paul, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," remarked that he had chosen this text not for exposition, but application as a point towards which the thought of his hearers might be directed, and on which their minds might rest as the ultimate hope of the church, and as the only basis of unity. He had received, he said, circulars from two committees requesting that sermons might be preached, commemorative of St. Bartholomew's Day. One of these committees was of a more exclusive character than the other, and contemplated somewhat narrower aims. He preferred therefore associating himself with the wider of the two, that called the Central United Bartholomew Committee, from whose circular he read an extract, and in the spirit of which he wished to say what he felt it his duty to deliver. The first part of the discourse was an historical résumé of the condition of the Church at the time of the Restoration, and which was described as actually without a constitution. By the ancient laws of England it was Episcopal; by the ordinances of the Long Parliament and the recommendations of the Westminster Assembly, it was Presbyterian; by the influence of the dominant sect under the Protectorate, it was merely an assemblage of congregations united only by common dependence on the civil power. Taking for granted, what only the most advanced though slender minority of that day disputed, that a State Church was a necessity, it was only reasonable that a re-settlement of the constitution of the Church should be made. The question was in what spirit was that re-settlement effected; and in what manner? The spirit was described as vindictive, a malicious retaliation on a party which had been in power at the expense of Episcopalians and royalists. The manner was the passing of the Act of Uniformity which required the most unequivocal assent of the clergy to the entire contents of the Book of Common Prayer. The second part of the discourse contained the lessons to be drawn from this passage in English Church history—the first and most obvious of which was that religious parties should not be permitted the power of applying to each other when dominant the temporal force of the State; in other words, that the connection of Church and State was an evil. Too much should not be made of the materials for argument yielded by the vicissitudes of religious parties and sects in the seventeenth century. The misfortunes and extravagances of each arose from neglect of the teaching of Christ and the example of his Apostles, that his kingdom was spiritual in its aim and force. The second was, that as the Church of England had for 200 years been using this act as the basis of agreement, she had declared, and does now, that her aim is not unity, i.e., the one Lord, faith, and Spirit of St. Paul, but uniformity. She covers her many diversities of doctrine and endeavours by a thin veil of uniformity. By so doing she is opposed to the New Testament, and has demonstrated that the creeds and prayers of her Liturgy cannot express the convictions and desires of all minds, and cannot, therefore, be used as the basis of a future united Church. The third was that the experience of the excluded Nonconformists themselves should teach us the utter futility of hoping to find unity in formulas of belief or identity of opinion. The men who began with the Westminster Confession and an inflexible creed, ended by requiring the letter of the Bible as the only test of orthodoxy. Were they living in the present day they would find that even that broad toleration was too narrow for the ingenuity of scepticism, and their bond of communion was a pale of exclusion to many whom they might wish to include. The last and highest lesson was to be drawn from the heroism of the men who were excluded. They went forth in obedience to the voice of conscience. In all our difficulties,

questions, policy, and aims, it becomes us to imitate them and bow before the supremacy of conscience.

KINGSLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—REV. T. AVELING.

Morning sermon, from John vii. 48, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" There are fashions in religion as in dress; and too often it is believed that they who set the one should regulate the other. The Sanhedrim, as a hierarchy having officially to do with religious matters, imagined they had a right to dictate what and who should be believed, and expected compliance. Hence the inquiry of the text. The history of the Church shows that men err egregiously if they take their religious opinions from the magnates of any land. "Not many mighty, not many noble," are found among the friends of God. Men are not at liberty to form their religious opinions from other men, but from the Word of God. The sentiments instilled into our youthful minds are to be tested by the Scriptures, or they will be uninfluential, and early be surrendered when assaults are made. Many in this day, as of old time, are more affected in their religious belief by what is respectable than by what is true—they follow the fashion. Unquestionably Nonconformity did not carry with it the suffrages of princes, prelates, or peers. It was deemed an impertinence and an evil that men should be found setting up their judgments against that of their rulers. It was supposed that wisdom dwelt with these. But religion is more an affair of the heart than the head; and often the humble in position are better able to form a sound judgment on a religious subject than the lofty—humility is better than high-mindedness. Have we believed on Him? All true religion renders itself into "faith on the Lord Jesus Christ," or faith which worketh by love. Imitate the blind man (John ix. 36), who, when asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" did not answer as the Sanhedrim did in the text, but inquired of the Saviour himself, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" The men whom today we delight to honour did not follow the fashion of their time, but believed on Christ; and, because it was necessary, took up their cross and followed him. Let us "not be slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

In the evening, Mr. Aveling preached from Galatians v. 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." The liberty spoken of here is that of the Christian, who follows the commands of Christ; the bondage, that of the ceremonial, loving spirit, that hopes to attain life by slavish adherence to externals. The Galatians had received the Gospel in its simplicity from Paul; but Judaizing teachers had sought to vitiate that simplicity, by insisting on circumcision, and so turning off the mind from the fundamentals of religion. Against this danger Paul warns them. It is the duty of men to follow the instructions of God in religious matters; and his word is to be the rule of their faith. What it teaches is to be received, both as to the "way of life," and the walk of life. Especial care is to be taken that the heart rest solely on the finished work of Christ for salvation; and repudiate all dependence on burdensome ceremonies or supposed expiatory acts or offerings. Fondness for these led Roman Catholicism to refasten the rivets which the Gospel had loosened. It insists on a round of ceremonies, very much like those of the Jewish ritual, and hides the pure Gospel under a mass of excrescences. The voice of truth is lost in a multitude of discordant sounds. Church of Englandism is but half-reformed Popery. It retains and insists on an earthly head, teaches baptismal regeneration, makes church-membership dependent on attendance, not character, and in the Burial Service tends to foster an awful delusion. It requires of its ministers assent and consent to everything in the Prayer-book, which contains some notoriously unscriptural dogmas. We must dissent because of these and other things. We cannot take the Prayer-book, but the Bible, for our creed—the former brings the soul into an ignoble bondage. Christ's true followers are to be free—free from human impositions of doctrine, but thoroughly and gladly submissive to the authority of Christ. The Established Church is exclusive. It must be so. It cannot fraternise with those who dissent from it, although these may be regarded as good men. We open our pulpits to all who preach Christ—they cannot, dare not. They are bound—we are free. Let us prize our liberty and use it well, to the glory of God and the good of the world.

STEPNEY MEETING HOUSE.

The minister of Stepney Meeting has postponed special reference to the great event of St. Bartholomew's, 1662, till next Sunday evening, when it has been announced that he will illustrate the spirit and character of the ejected by extracts from the farewell sermon of his illustrious predecessor, Matthew Mead. But on last Lord's-day evening, the Rev. James Kennedy, M.A., lately returned from Benares, occupied the pulpit of Stepney Meeting, and delivered a sermon appropriate to the day, on John iv. 38, "Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours." The following outline of thought was pursued:—Members of the church die, but the church lives; prophets had been taken away, but apostles appeared to carry on their work. Labour for God and man is the heritage of the church. The labour of those who went before leads to the labour of their successors, as the sower's work paves the way for the reaper's toil. There is a great



diversity in the work carried on, but the different parts are inseparably connected. All God's people labour in the great field of humanity, with the same great object, and in the employment of the same great instrument. Though sowers and reapers be often separated from each other by centuries, all will meet at last to celebrate the harvest feast. As Christians we must be labourers, and we ought to take a deep interest in our fellow-labourers, especially in those who have by their toil and suffering secured for us a freedom and scope of effort to which they themselves were strangers. A brief sketch of the Puritans was then given. Among their opponents there were no doubt worthy men; but they belonged to a party devoted to passive obedience, and mere ritual religion, while the Puritans, as a party, were animated by principles most worthy of our regard. We ought to look at the principles of parties, and to judge them accordingly—not as individuals or superficial peculiarities; otherwise, we may make heathenism better than Christianity (1 Cor. v. 2), Romanism better than Protestantism. The great Puritan principles were—1st. The supremacy of the Bible as the rule of faith; 2. The simplicity and spirituality of God's worship; 3. Staunch attachment to evangelical doctrine; 4. Deep personal piety; 5. The right of the people to a place in the government of the Church, though there was not agreement as to what their position should be, and consequent opposition to mere arbitrary and oligarchy government. Through this channel came their advocacy of freedom in the State. 6. Love to the Sabbath; 7. High appreciation of the pulpit; 8. Public Christian spirit; 9. Thorough conscientiousness. We are far from holding all their views. We indulge in no indiscriminate praise of them, or censure of their opponents. We ought to follow them as they followed Christ. The hearers were urged in the end to conformity to Christ and non-conformity to the world, the flesh, and the devil. There was a large attendance at Stepney Meeting on this occasion.

#### BOW, MIDDLESEX.

The Rev. C. J. Middleditch preached from Acts iv. 19, from which he deduced the principle, that human authority is not to be obeyed in opposition to the Divine. He then gave an account of the ejection as an important event in the English ecclesiastical history. He dwelt at considerable length on the Act of Uniformity, stating its requirements, its design, the reasons why the ejected refused to comply with it, and its results. He also referred to several cases of local interest. He described, too, the massacre of the French Protestants on Bartholomew Day, 1572. In conclusion, he showed the connexion between the principles of Nonconformity and social welfare, referring to the manner in which Nonconformists had contributed to the well-being of the nation by securing the succession of the British Crown to the House of Hanover, and also by the introduction of the woollen and silk manufacturers into Britain. He showed also the connexion between the principles of Nonconformity and the maintenance of Scripture doctrine and discipline, referring to the fact that perverts to Rome go from the State Church, and not from the ranks of Nonconformists. He then spoke of the bearing of Nonconformist principles on personal piety, exhorting his hearers to hold fast the truth, as men concerned for the freedom and welfare of the nation; as Christians, concerned for the purity of doctrine and discipline in the Church of Christ; and, above all, as immortal beings, concerned for their own eternal interests. The lecture, which occupied an hour and ten minutes in delivery, was clear and outspoken on the principle of non-interference by the State in matters of religion, but was, at the same time, free from any expression of uncharitableness towards men who deny, or dissent from, the principle itself.

#### CAMBERWELL.

On Sunday morning the Rev. C. Stanford preached at Denmark-place Chapel, Camberwell, from Hebrews xiii. v. 7. Regarding the words, "Them that have the rule over you," as simply descriptive of office, and having shown that the apostle only had reference to departed pastors, he made the order of the sermon to follow the development of the thoughts contained in the text: 1. Remember your leaders; 2. Copy their fidelity; 3. That you may be encouraged to do this, consider the end of their course; 4. That you may have strength for it, look to "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." This charge was applied so as to set forth the honour that is due to the memory of the Nonconformist confessors. Towards the close of an interesting discourse, the preacher said—The result of our independent inquiry and prayer is, that we are resolved in our church capacity to know no king but Christ, no statute-book but the Bible, no human force but conscience, no support but free-will offerings, and no profession but what is based on individual faith. This spirit of catholicity enters into the very basis of our Dissent, it must be connected with the real and intelligent adoption of what have just been said to be its fundamental principles. We would most earnestly avoid, and help others to avoid, what will tempt "Judah to vex Ephraim, and Ephraim to envy Judah;" and because nothing works this evil more effectually than the connexion of religion with the State, the system that confers political benefits on one section of the Church, and inflicts political humiliations and inconveniences on another, it is not a schismatical, but only a catholic act to separate ourselves from it, and to decline sharing its splendid advantages. The event brought to mind by the Bicentenary con-

firms us in the belief of this doctrine, and this is one of its important incidental uses. But, perhaps, its greatest value is to be found in the grand example which it supplies of fidelity to conscience in matters of religion. The Prayer-book, understood in its grammatical sense, contained, in the opinion of the Puritans, many things at variance with Evangelical truth. They were required to give the usual clerical pledge of solemn and absolute approval of "all and everything" in the book. They might have found it convenient to understand some of the objectionable phrases in "a non-natural sense;" they might have chosen to regard the pledge required of them as a "mere form," meaning nothing more than willingness to accept orders; they might have practised the doctrines of reserve or expediency; but amidst the storm of trouble they stood faithful to God and conscience. We would cast no ungenerous reflections on any man, living or departed. We judge no man. But we think that great good may be done by the story of Bartholomew day, and that there is great need for it. We would therefore publish it afresh, in the hope that in all things, little or great, many will be induced to carry out the honest and faithful spirit which its confessors so impressively displayed, and that it may prove of especial use to thousands who are tempted to be unthoughtful, if not untruthful, in their religious subscriptions or professions.

#### LOWER NORWOOD.

The Rev. Benjamin Kent preached in the morning from John xv. 15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Mr. Kent, after dwelling upon the distinguishing features of the old and the new economy implied in these words of our Lord, remarked that under the Jewish economy the servants of God were like soldiers in an army who execute the commands of their superiors without understanding the plan which they were helping to work out; while Christians were like the commanders who have been informed by their chief of the nature and importance of the movement in which they are engaged, and who have his mind committed to them, and are thus enabled fully to sympathise with his views. Therefore two things which are enjoined upon us are (1st), "Insight into God's purpose in founding the kingdom of truth," and (2nd) "Sympathy with our Lord's method of diffusing his truth." Under the latter of the divisions Mr. Kent said the intelligent promulgation of the Gospel means the increase of friends—you make a disciple for Christ when you gain him a friend willing to live for him and to die for him; consequently the old way of compelling by fines and imprisonment, threatening with exclusion from office or society all who refused to become members of a church, as well as the modern way of condemning to social degradation and loss those who decline subscription to certain tests, is quite inconsistent with the attempt to bring men to a knowledge of Christ. In connecting these remarks with the ejectionment of 1662, and speaking of the refusal of godly men to subscribe to all and everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, Mr. Kent said:—

By refusing subscription they transmitted to posterity a legacy of far greater value to us than they could imagine; the Clarendons and the Sheldons, who made the subscription impossible, little thought how, in their safe hour of vengeance, they were preparing the minds of their countrymen in the next century to take larger views of the whole question of subscription.

Looking at the future of the Church of Christ in England, Mr. Kent said:—

One sign of our times inspires me with hope—it is the elevation of the working classes. That a new power, another estate of the realm, is rising into view, is evident to all. Having survived the delusions of Chartism, Socialism, strikes, patient to a proverb, with many faults, yet working their way to independence, they must seek in Secularism or in the church for an answer to the question about human destiny! It would be shocking unbelief to suppose that they will discover a door of hope other than the Gospel of God. But their adhesion to Christianity will necessitate a freer development, a more popular constitution of the church, than we see now. The people having been admitted to the enjoyment of all other rights, will hardly endure the deprivation of the rights and privileges of the Christian people. Choosing their representatives in Parliament, they will demand to choose their ministers. Tamely to forego this privilege is to renounce the privileges of the Christian priesthood.

Towards the conclusion of his discourse, Mr. Kent, looking forward to the fourth centenary of the ejectionment of 1662, said that as the question of subscription was virtually decided in the seventeenth century, so it would probably then appear that in the nineteenth century the question of an Established Church was decided. In the evening, Mr. Kent pursued the same subject, stating the reasons why the two thousand ministers had left the Church of England, and giving also the reasons which led him to remain outside the Establishment.

#### PARK CHAPEL, CAMDEN-TOWN.

The Rev. J. C. Harrison preached two sermons in commemoration of the ejectionment. The morning text was Acts xxiv. 16, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men," from which he took occasion to show the importance of conscientiousness not only as regards subscription, but in every department of religious and practical life. The evening text was Psalm lvi. 11, "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." The subject was, "Unflinching Courage as

the Result of Faith." Both morning and evening many historical facts connected with the Act of Uniformity and the ejected were used as illustrations. Collections were made on behalf of the Pastors' Retiring Fund, which amounted, with the addition of a few donations, to 104l. 6s. 9d.

#### BIRMINGHAM.

THE REV. R. W. DALE.

The day was observed in Birmingham and the neighbouring districts by the various congregations of Independents, Baptists, and Unitarians. The chapels, as a rule, were attended morning and evening by crowded congregations, and in some instances collections were made for denominational or educational purposes.

At Carr's-lane Chapel, the Rev. R. W. Dale preached two sermons on the occasion of the Bicentenary. In the morning he took his text from the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and part of the 8th verse, "He went out knowing not whither he went;" and, in commencing his address, said that if it were necessary to offer any defence for calling the attention of his congregation to the noble and courageous fidelity to conscience of the Two Thousand, he could appeal at once to the chapter from which he had taken his text, and which one of the ejected, in his farewell sermon, quaintly called "A little book of martyrs," and this record of the achievements of righteous men did not stand alone in Holy Scriptures. The book, although it was written to reveal the will of God to man, was largely occupied with the story of man's life, with its transient sufferings and joys. Nor did the writers care chiefly about what would be called the greater and more splendid events in history. The principal kingdoms of the ancient world did not find an historian in these men, but page after page of their writings were filled with the life of Noah, of Abraham, of Joseph, of Moses, of Elijah, of Daniel, and of Paul. The explanation of this was easy. The life of a good man was a far better teaching than any code of laws, and it was of more consequence that they should know how God rejoiced over the efforts of individual men to keep his commandments, and how he punished sin, than that they should be familiar with the splendour and decay of great empires; for the infirmities and faults of good men indicate the perils by which we ourselves are threatened, and the long-suffering of God in bearing with their imperfections, and his mercy in blotting out their sins, and this fact had on many occasions drawn them back to God when the declarations of his compassion and love had failed to do it. A fact made a deeper impression on the heart than a promise. The reverend gentleman then proceeded to say that no man must censure them for thanking God on that day for the illustrious example of their Nonconformist forefathers, and for praying that they, like them, might be enabled to "serve God with a pure conscience," and "not only to believe in Christ," but also, if needs be, "to suffer for his sake." It was not his intention on that day to narrate the protracted and complicated events which issued in the ejectionment of the Nonconformists. It would be sufficient for him to say that on that day two hundred years ago, about two thousand clergymen of the English Church were driven from their pulpits by the Act of Uniformity. The rev. clergyman then proceeded to quote from the preamble of the act, with which our readers will be pretty well acquainted. Seven thousand ministers complied with the requirements of the act, by declaring their "assent and consent" to the Book of Common Prayer, and declaring that it was unlawful to take up arms against the king; and two thousand refusing to do so were ejected. They feared the displeasure of Almighty God more than poverty and shame, and the wrath of the king; and they gave up their livings, their homes, their characters, their people, and went forth knowing nothing that should befall them, except that the dark and evil days were near, and that "bonds and afflictions" awaited them. On the 17th of August many of them preached their farewell sermons, and on the 24th they ceased to be ministers of the Church of England. Among these two thousand men were the clergymen of many neighbouring parishes and towns, and amongst them the ministers of Moseley, King's Norton, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Tipton, Sedgley, Roley Regis, Sutton, and several of the ministers of Coventry. Some of these came to live in Birmingham, and in Birmingham they died. Then he intended, in the first place, to observe that in separating from the communion of the English Church they believed that they were obeying the voice of God. Many supposed that the ministers had no alternative with respect to leaving the Church, that they were justly driven out in order that their livings might be filled with the Royalist clergy whom they had dispossessed during the Commonwealth; but it was forgotten that many of them had held office long before the Civil War, and had been consecrated by the bishops and presented to livings long before the committee for expelling scandalous ministers were heard of. It was also forgotten that on the return of the King every clergyman who had not been implicated in the death of Charles I., or had not discountenanced infant baptism, was reinstated. The clergymen whose ejectionment they were met to celebrate did not leave the Church because they were compelled by the powers above them in the nation, but because they could not conscientiously remain any longer in communion. This was the great lesson of the ejectionment. It was a lesson not only for those who sustained office in the Church and were the public teachers of religious truth, reminding them that for



the sake of their own souls and the souls of their congregations, they must be honest in their speech, but it was also a lesson for all Christian men, that a crooked, ambiguous, and time-serving policy in public affairs must be ruinous to the moral strength and nobleness of any nation. The smooth insincerities which were apt to find their way into social intercourse, the consent of the lip and the countenance where the judgment and the heart protested, the eager flattery of wealth and power, the cowardly shrinking from the avowal of unpopular opinion, the doubtful methods of attracting custom in business, and winning preferment and fame—all those they would feel reproved to-day. The rev. gentleman then proceeded to read the texts of the farewell sermons preached by some of the foremost amongst the ejected ministers, and said that the sermons, so far as he had read, contained very few direct allusions to the controversy, which had ended so sadly. They had on that solemn occasion left that out of the question, and exhorted their congregation to live holy lives. In the second part of his discourse the rev. gentleman said that the ministers in obeying the voice of conscience, which to them was the voice of God, had, many of them, to surrender all the resources on which they could rely for the support of themselves and their children. They "went out, not knowing whither they went." He compared the ejection to the revolution which had taken place in the Church of Scotland in our own time, in which 500 ministers made a glorious protest against the bondage of the Church to the civil power. Passing to the third division of his address, the preacher said that in obeying the voice of conscience the ejected were ignorant of the full significance of their own act, and the great results in which it was to issue. They "went out," not knowing that their secession would signalise a new epoch in the ecclesiastical history of this country. It appeared to him to be a principle of God's moral government to call men to acts of obedience and self-denial, without revealing to them at the time all that was involved in their determination to obey or neglect the word. It was so in the case of Abraham, when he was commanded by God to leave his country. At that time the patriarch had no idea that his race was to have immortal supremacy over the spiritual life of man; he could not have had any idea that all the first-born in Egypt would be slain, that his descendants might go free; neither did he imagine that a prince of the seed of Abraham would sit upon the throne of the Highest. It was so with the apostles when commanded to leave their nets, and it was so with the ejected ministers. But Nonconformity ultimately became a prominent power in the country. Under the Toleration Act of 1688 Dissenting churches developed a free ecclesiastical polity, and the principles of voluntarism which during the civil war were professed by few men of any distinction, were now become firmly rooted in the English soil. Their act of self-sacrifice had thus issued in results of the highest value, both in reference to the theory of the government of individual churches and the true relation between Church and State. The statesmen and bishops of the Restoration meant by violent courses to reduce the religious life of this country to a rigid uniformity, but their act, through the providence of God, was overruled, as greatly to accelerate the progress of religious freedom, and it was his opinion that its ultimate result would be the separation of the Church and the State. He then shortly referred to the character of the men who were driven from the Church. They were men of indomitable courage in the presence of danger, and there was perhaps a ruggedness about them which would perhaps be distasteful to the refinement and moral effeminacy of this generation. They were too powerfully impressed with the importance of man's destiny to look with patience upon the glittering vanity and brilliant trifling of the wits and courtiers of the dissolute Court of Charles the Second. In conclusion, Mr. Dale said:—

As we look back upon the history of the Church, we see in every age, even the darkest and most dreary, the patient endurance, and apostolic labours, the purity and devotedness of the servants of Christ, and that our Nonconformist fathers do but form part of a splendid procession of saintly men, who have arisen in all churches and in all lands. We see that the glory which descended at the day of Pentecost has often become dim, but has never been extinguished, and it can never fade away. We, too, in our time, may hope for the spirit of wisdom and revelation; the faith that overcomes the world; the hope that transforms the soul into the image of Christ; and the energy that witnesses to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The memory of the illustrious dead should strengthen our faith in the living Christ, and their bright example—while it stimulates us to attempt a nobler type of godliness—should give us courage and hope in that high endeavour. To us the same promises are spoken; to us the same Christ is revealed; in us the same Spirit dwells, and even we may hope, though with inferior powers, and in a less terrible crisis of the history of the Church and the world, with the divine help, like them to be "faithful unto death, and to inherit a crown of everlasting life," and may God, in his mercy, grant that the spirit of our fathers may rest upon us!

A hymn was then sung, and the minister having pronounced the benediction, the great congregation separated.

In the evening, the sermon was founded on Acts v. 29, "We ought to obey God rather than men." In these words, said the preacher, the Apostle asserts the direct allegiance owing by the human soul to God. He said that none of the great parties during the time of the Commonwealth had a clear understanding of the principles of religious liberty; but the Puritans and Nonconformists, though they approved the action of the civil magistrate in support

ing the laws of Christ, were prepared to resist him at the peril of their lives when he enforced laws which had only an ecclesiastical origin, and were condemned by the New Testament. It was shown that this assertion of the supremacy of Christ was historically the foundation of religious freedom in England; that the Act of Toleration was not the triumph of a liberal political theory, but was a necessary concession to men who stood apart from the Establishment because they were resolved to obey God rather than man. The direct responsibility of the soul to God was shown to be (1), the soundest and noblest foundation of the principles of religious freedom; (2), the most effective stimulus to the careful and thoughtful investigation of truth; (3), the surest guarantee of inflexible honesty in the profession of personal convictions. The preacher, in the second division of his discourse, insisted on the importance of giving prominence to the religious argument in the struggle which still lies before the Nonconformists for the complete separation of the Church from the State. He admitted that there were sound political arguments for keeping the civil and ecclesiastical powers apart; but for himself, he did not accept the theory that Government had no legitimate functions beyond the protection of life and property. The clearest and strongest ground for Nonconformists to take was to protest against the alliance of Church and State on religious grounds, and to show the injury it inflicted on the spiritual interests of the country. The preacher concluded by insisting on the awfulness and the glory of the individual responsibility of every man to God.—The collections and proposed contributions, which are appropriated to the Pastors' Retiring Fund, Paris Chapel, Memorial Hall, Spring-hill Prize Scholarship, a Bicentenary chapel for Birmingham, and a new Town Mission chapel, amounted to 608*l.* The list is not yet complete.

At the Edgbaston Congregational chapel the Rev. G. B. Johnson preached in the morning from 2 Corinthians vi. 4, "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God." In the evening from 2 Corinthians xiii. 8, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth;" and in the evening from Jeremiah v. 3, "O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth?" The contributions amounted to 627*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.*

At the Old Meeting-house the Rev. Charles Clarke preached special sermons, morning and evening, from Revelation v. 13—15, and the words in which the Apostle exhorts the believers in the Galatian Church to continue in the liberty which they had obtained. The discourse in the morning was devoted to the history of the Ejection of the Two Thousand ministers in 1662, by the passing of the Act of Uniformity, and the causes and influences which led to the passing of that act. In the evening he commenced by giving a brief résumé of the principal points in the morning's discourse, and then proceeded to notice their own personal history as a congregation. A collection was made at the close in aid of the schools connected with the congregation.

At Highbury Chapel, Graham-street, the Rev. W. F. Callaway preached in the morning, upon the intention and the results of the Act of Uniformity, from 1 Kings xii. 15, "Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord." In the evening, the sermon had a direct bearing upon the character and history of the ejected ministers. The lesson, John ix., was introduced as "the tale of the first excommunicated Christian Dissenter." The text was Psalm lxxix. 6, "Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel." Towards the close, Mr. Callaway enforced the following exhortations: Firstly, let us avow that we are not ashamed that they lived. To this very day Nonconformity has been regarded as not respectable. Very recently attempts had been made to defile the memories of these men. But we are not ashamed of them nor their cause. Secondly, let us acknowledge that they make us ashamed of ourselves by their great piety and intense conscientiousness, by their abundance in all godly labour in the midst of sufferings, and by their unflinching trust in God. Thirdly, let us purpose so to live henceforth, that our successors may not have cause to be ashamed of us, making religion our life's work, keeping piously from every evil thing, labouring to save the souls of men, and struggling and praying for the freedom and purity of Christ's church.

At Wyoliffe Chapel, Bristol-road, the services were conducted by the Rev. J. J. Brown. He took for his text, Rev. xiv. 4 and 5, "Those are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. And in their mouth was found no guile."

At Cannon-street Chapel, the Rev. Isaac Lord was the preacher. In the morning he took for his text, 1 Peter iii. 16, and founded upon it, as the subject of his discourse, "A good conscience." He pointed out in a most forcible manner what a good conscience is, what it does, and what it brings. In the evening, his text was taken from Heb. x. 32—34.

At the Legge-street Chapel, the morning sermon was preached by the Rev. P. Sibree, from the text Rev. xiv. 4, 5. In the afternoon an open-air service was held, and a sermon delivered, founded upon Acts xvii. 7; subject, "Christ, the Lord of Conscience." In the evening Mr. B. Worton preached from the text, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12). Collections after the sermons were made for Hockley Chapel and s.h. o' room, and realised 20*l.* For the Spring-hill Scholarship 1*l.* 1*s.* was subscribed.

At the Lozells Chapel the Rev. J. T. Feaston preached in the morning from Psalms cxii. 6, "The

righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." The text in the evening was Zechariah viii. 19, "Love the truth and peace." "Love to the truth," the rev. gentleman said, is shown by making earnest efforts to discover it; by not being ashamed of it; by revering the memory of its confessors; by endeavouring to diffuse it; and by practising it. The congregations were large both morning and evening. The amount collected was 10*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.*

At Hope-street Baptist Chapel, in the evening, a very impressive discourse was delivered by Mr. R. T. Rhodes, from Hebrews xi. 24—26. In the course of his sermon the preacher adverted to the controversy that has taken place in the present year, arguing that it was not sought for by Nonconformists, but commenced by the members of the Church themselves. He went on to show reasons why we, even as the two thousand ejected ministers, should not conform to the Prayer-book, and also portrayed, in a touching manner, the suffering and privation endured by those good men through being faithful to the truth.

At Circus Chapel, Bradford-street, in the morning the Rev. J. P. Barnett selected 2 Timothy iii. 12, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In the evening the text chosen was Hebrews xi. 38, "Of whom the world was not worthy." The controversies originated by this Bicentenary would, he said, be sure to diffuse much information on the various points at issue, and to contribute greatly to the ultimate liberation of religion from all State patronage and control. Meanwhile, as they applauded the Two Thousand for the high virtues they displayed, and the noble work they did, let them reserve their highest praise for Him whose grace made them what they were, and seek for larger communications of that grace to themselves. There was no collection.

At the Church of the Messiah (Unitarian), as at other places, a special sermon was preached by the Rev. S. Bache. The collections amounted to 79*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.*

#### PLYMOUTH, &c.

On Sunday, Bicentenary sermons were preached in most of the Nonconformist places of worship in Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse. At Norley-street Chapel, the Rev. Charles Wilson, M.A., preached in the morning on the Bicentenary, taking for his text, Heb. xi. 8, "He went out, not knowing whither he went." In the evening, the rev. gentleman continued his subject, taking his text from Acts xxiv. 16. This discourse was a most eloquent one, practically applying the subject treated of in the morning, especially as regarded the individual conscientiousness of the clergymen who went out in the great secession. The chapel was densely crowded.—At Batter-street Chapel, the Rev. Mr. Hipwood preached in the evening, taking for his text, Heb. xi. 37—40, "They wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy)," &c. In the course of his sermon, he referred to some facts in the history of a few of the prominent men who had suffered in the counties of Cornwall and Devon.—At George-street Chapel, in the evening, an admirable discourse, appropriate to the occasion, on the duty of Christians to the civil Government, founded on the words of Christ, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," was delivered by the Rev. T. C. Page.—The Rev. C. B. Symes (Union Chapel), preached from John xix. 36.—At the Presbyterian Church, Eldad, the Rev. Jos. Wood preached from Daniel iii. 16—18, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, we are not careful to answer you in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." The services concluded with a collection towards the erection of Presbyterian churches in England.—At Morice-square, Devonport, the Rev. John Stock selected for reading the 3rd chapter of Daniel, which, he remarked, gave an account of an Act of Uniformity which was passed 580 years before Christ, in the old city of Babylon, in which it would be found that there were Dissenters who had to suffer for their Nonconformity, being cast into a burning fiery furnace, and whose dissent was commended by God. Acts, chapter viii., was also read. "That," said the rev. gentleman, "is an account of another Act of Uniformity, passed by the highest tribunal of the Jewish nation, the Sanhedrim." Mr. Stock's discourse was founded on Matthew xxii. 21, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's," and consisted of an examination of the fundamental principle at issue, the union of Church and State. The concluding portion of the rev. gentleman's discourse was addressed to stimulating the zeal and removing the objections urged by lukewarm Nonconformists for their want of energetic effort in securing this severance of the Church from State control.—At the Unitarian Chapel the Rev. Henry Knott addressed his congregation on the subject of the Bicentenary. Many details were given of the sufferers for conscience' sake, and their true successors were pointed out, and an earnest appeal made on behalf of a fund to be called the Bicentenary Fund, the object of which is to increase, by yearly grants, the smaller stipends of Unitarian ministers.—At Princess-street Chapel, Devonport, the Rev. R. W. Carpenter preached a sermon from 1 Tim. iii. 9, "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

(For remainder of "The Bicentenary" see page 730.)



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